

FROM THE DIRECTOR  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

The Census Bureau routinely conducts a survey on the economic situation of persons and families in the United States. In that survey, we ask questions on topics such as jobs, earnings, and participation in various government programs. We use the information obtained from the survey to learn more about how people are meeting their everyday expenses and how government programs are working.

We are currently redesigning this survey to make sure that it continues to provide a clear picture of our country's economic well-being. A Census Bureau field representative, who will display an official identification card, will call on you in the next few days. The field representative will be asking you questions on the topics mentioned above in a different way than ever before. We will use the results from this study to determine how well the new way of asking questions obtains information.

Your participation is essential to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the data for this study. Although there are no penalties for failure to answer any question in this voluntary study, each unanswered question substantially lessens the accuracy of the final results.

We conduct this study under the authority of Title 13, United States Code, Section 182. Section 9 of Title 13 requires that we hold all information about you and your household in strictest confidence. By law, we may use this information only for statistical purposes and only in ways that no information about you as an individual can be identified.

On the other side of this letter are the answers to frequently asked questions. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Groves  
Director, U.S. Census Bureau

## **Why does the Census Bureau collect this information?**

Although we conduct a census every ten years, some information needs to be updated more often. This survey provides current data about a variety of important issues, such as changes people have experienced in their jobs, health insurance coverage, and medical expenditures; the well-being of children and adults; childcare and child support status; retirement and pension planning; participation in government programs; and other information. Since the country changes rapidly, up-to-date facts are necessary in order to create effective programs. Policymakers in government and private organizations need current economic information to make informed decisions about programs that will affect people of all income levels. Your voluntary participation is essential to ensure that this survey's results are complete and accurate.

## **How do I know the Census Bureau will protect my information?**

The law authorizes the Census Bureau to collect information for this survey (Title 13, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 182). Section 9 of this law requires us to keep all information about you and your household strictly confidential. The Census Bureau will use this information only for statistical purposes. Everyone who has access to your responses is subject to a prison term, a fine up to \$250,000, or both, if any information is revealed that identifies you or your household.

## **How will the Census Bureau use the information that I provide?**

Because Title 13 guarantees the confidentiality of your information, the Census Bureau will combine the information you provide with that of others to produce statistics. To be efficient, the Census Bureau attempts to obtain information you may have given to other agencies if you have participated in other government programs. We do so because it helps to ensure your data are complete, and it reduces the number of questions you are asked on this survey. The same confidentiality laws that protect your survey answers also protect any additional information we collect (Title 13, U.S.C., Section 9). If you wish to request that your information not be combined with information from other agencies, we ask that you notify the field representative at the time of the interview.

## **How much time will the survey take?**

We estimate that it will take about 30 minutes per person to collect the information. This includes time for reviewing the instructions and completing and reviewing your answers. After the initial interview, we will conduct a follow-up interview periodically, in order to learn how people's economic situations change over time. You may send comments regarding time estimates or any other aspect of this data collection process, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Paperwork Reduction Project xxxx-xxxx, U.S. Census Bureau, 4600 Silver Hill Road, Room 3K138, Washington, DC 20233. You may also e-mail comments to <[Paperwork@census.gov](mailto:Paperwork@census.gov)>; use "Paperwork Project xxxx-xxxx" as the subject.

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved this survey and gave it OMB approval Number xxxx-xxxx. Displaying this number shows that the Census Bureau is authorized to conduct this survey. Please use this number in any correspondence concerning this survey.